

Appendix B

Recreation Development at Ecosystem Restoration Projects

1. Purpose. This appendix provides additional guidance on the planning and development of outdoor recreation facilities at single purpose ecosystem restoration projects. It provides a limited checklist of recreation facilities which may be cost shared at new Corps ecosystem restoration projects, a discussion of locally preferred plans, and presents reporting guidelines for presentation of recreation development.

2. Background. Section 4 of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended, authorizes the Chief of Engineers to construct, operate, and maintain recreation facilities at water resources projects under the control of the Department of the Army (16 U.S.C. 460d). Long established policy precludes cost sharing development of new recreation facilities at completed projects. Current budget constraints and the intense competition for Federal funds dictate austerity in the planning and design of recreation facilities at proposed Civil Works projects.

3. Principles for Recreation Development. At many ecosystem restoration projects, the land base provided by the ecosystem restoration project may afford a low cost opportunity for recreation facilities. Recreation facilities to be cost shared at new ecosystem restoration projects must comply with three major criteria: (a) philosophy and inclusion on the checklist in this appendix, (b) economic justification; and, (c) the ten percent limit rule.

a. Philosophy. The Federal interest, for the purpose of Federal investment, is determined from the nature of the benefits derived from a facility or activity. Recreation at ecosystem restoration projects should not only be compatible, but also enhance the visitation experience by taking advantage of the natural values. The social, cultural, scientific, and educational values should be considered within the framework and scope of the ecosystem restoration project purpose. For example, while educational values, through such things as nature study and interpretive signs, can be an integral part of ecosystem restoration projects, this does not mean it is appropriate to build recreation/visitor facilities that overwhelm the natural values. The recreational experience should build upon the ecosystem restoration objective and take advantage of the restored resources rather than detract from them.

(1) Formulation. Recreation development will not influence the formulation of ecosystem restoration projects (ER 1105-2-100). Ecosystem projects and recreation features proposed for construction at existing Corps projects should be consistent with the approved Master Plan (ER 1130-2-550, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Policies).

(2) Vendibility and Stand-alone Principle. If recreation benefits are vendible (type usually provided by private enterprise), then the facility should be provided by others. If a recreation feature could be built at the same location without the ecosystem restoration project and not

lose any of its utility or value, it stands alone. When recreation facilities stand alone, the Corps should not participate in their development (ER 1165-2-400, Appendix B).

(3) Access, health and safety. The Corps may participate in facility development to provide access to and along the project features. The development of these facilities should not involve extensive structural modification of the terrain and may include rest areas and picnic facilities. Ideally, these facilities would be a part of a larger non-Corps recreation plan, such as a regional trail system, or provide access to other non-Federal recreation facilities or areas.

b. Check List of Recreation Facilities. A checklist of recreation facilities which may be cost shared at new ecosystem restoration projects is provided at the end of this appendix. Exceptions to the approved recreation facilities must be fully justified and approved by CECW-P prior to submitting the project report. Facilities to be cost shared are limited to standard designs consistent with the natural environment of the surrounding area but should not include embellishments such as decorative stone work planters, elaborate designs or be ostentatious. Recreation development must be provided on the lands needed and acquired for the basic ecosystem restoration project, except that additional recreation land may be acquired if needed for access, parking, potable water, sanitation and related development for health, safety and public access. Where appropriate, recreation at ecosystem restoration projects should be designed for day use only, precluding the need of extensive night lighting. Plans should seek to optimize public use in harmony with the objectives of the restoration project over the period of analysis. Without a non-Federal sponsor to cost share recreation, ecosystem restoration projects should not encourage public use (ER 1165-2-400, Appendix C).

c. Economic Justification. Reports recommending recreation development will clearly present the formulation and justification of the recreation plan to be recommended for Federal implementation. Federal participation should be limited to support development that capitalizes on the recreation potential afforded by the ecosystem restoration project. Incremental justification of recreation features will be demonstrated in the report. The addition of recreation to the plan will not influence formulation of the basic ecosystem restoration project which must produce monetary and/or non-monetary benefits which justify the monetary and/or non-monetary costs without recreation. The report will include a description of the competing recreation facilities, their existing and expected future use with and without the project, and the unfulfilled demand for the recreation facilities as identified in such documents as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Recreation benefits, costs and cost sharing must be shown separately (ER 1105-2-100, Chapters 2 and 4).

d. Ten Percent Limit Rule. The level of financial participation in recreation development by the Corps at an otherwise justifiable project may not increase the Federal cost of the ecosystem restoration project by more than ten percent without prior approval of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works). The purpose of this limit is to concentrate scarce Civil Works funds on high priority ecosystem restoration features rather than recreation development. The ten

percent limit should be viewed as an upper limit on Federal cost sharing and not as a goal for expenditures. The cost of recreation facilities to be cost shared would normally be less than the ten percent limit.

4. Cost Sharing. The cost of recreation facility development is shared 50/50 percent between the Government and non-Federal sponsors. Separable lands required for public access, health, and safety, are the responsibility of non-Federal sponsors, with crediting toward the sponsor's 50 percent share of development costs. Any cost in excess of 50 percent will be the responsibility of the non-Federal sponsor and will not be reimbursed to the local sponsor by the Federal government. The cost of lands provided by non-Federal sponsors for the basic project are not included for recreation cost sharing purposes. Established policy permits credit towards recreation cost sharing for incremental costs of increasing the real estate interests in land within the boundary acquired for the basic ecosystem restoration project. Additional guidance is provided in reference ER 1105-2-100. Operation, maintenance, replacement, repair and rehabilitation costs are the responsibility of the local sponsor (ER 1165-2-400, Paragraph 7; ER 1105-2-100, Chapter 4).

5. Locally Preferred Plan. A non-Federal sponsor may desire to include recreation facilities that are not on the enclosed checklist, are more elaborate than permitted, do not meet the "stand alone" principle, exceed the ten percent limit rule, are not on lands required for the basic ecosystem restoration project, or cannot be economically justified. Such facilities may be recommended as the locally preferred plan only if they are compatible with the ecosystem restoration purpose. The costs of planning and implementation of facilities provided as the locally preferred plan must be financed by the non-Federal sponsor, cannot be included in the benefit/cost ratio, and will not be credited against the sponsors share of cost shared facilities. Should a locally preferred ecosystem restoration plan include a greater land base than required by the recommended ecosystem restoration plan, and thus extend the project beyond the real limits of the ecosystem restoration plan, the Federal Government can participate in recreation development of the locally preferred ecosystem restoration plan. However, Federal participation in recreation development will be limited to those facilities shown on the enclosed check list and cannot exceed ten percent of the Federal share of the cost of the recommended ecosystem restoration plan, and all lands must be provided by the non-Federal sponsor.

6. Reporting Guidelines. The scope of the recreation development approved in the project report should be carried through to project completion. Any increase or deviation in the type or scope of cost shared facilities following approval of the project report must be reported to HQUSACE (CECW-P) for approval prior to any expenditure of either Federal or non-Federal funds on that recreation feature.

**Checklist of Facilities
Which May Be Cost Shared
as Part of Recreation Development at
Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Projects**

I. Access and Circulation: Roads; Turnarounds; Trails (multiple-use); Parking; Bridges and Culverts; Walks; Steps/ramps; Footbridges¹.

II. Structures: Sanitation - Vault Toilets, Comfort Stations; Shelters - Picnic, Trail.

III. Utilities: Water Supply - Municipal System², Wells, Drinking Fountains and Faucets; Sewage and Waste Water Disposal - Municipal System, Septic Tanks and Tile Fields; Storm Drainage; Public Telephone.

IV. Site Preparation/Restoration: Clearing and Grubbing; Grading and Land Form; Vegetative restoration - includes native trees, shrubs and turf establishment.

V. Park Furniture: Picnic Tables; Trash Receptacles/Holders; Benches.

VI. Signs: Entrance-Directional-Marker; Traffic Control (Vehicular and Pedestrian); Instructional (Includes Fire Danger Notices).

VII. Interpretive Guidance and Media: Display Boards; Interpretive Markers (Natural, Historical, Archeological, etc.); Bulletin Board.

VIII. Protection, Control, Health and Safety: Gates and Barricades; Cattle Guards; Walls and Fencing; Guardrails; Entrance Stations; Lighting; Handrails.

¹ Footbridges are to be austere and used only when other crossings methods are impractical. Footbridges which are the center of recreation experience are to be a non-Federal cost. Pedestrian bridges at highways or railroads are normally a non-Federal cost; however, if they are integral to the recreation feature and the most cost effective alternative, they may be cost shared.

² Connection to an existing municipal system.